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#### Citation for published version:

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Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

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Professor Norma Dawson: Legal Historian, C.B.E.

Posted on [19/06/2017](#) by [John Cairns](#)

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The Blog is delighted to note that the distinguished legal historian, Professor Norma Dawson, of Queen’s University Belfast, has been honoured by Her Majesty with appointment as C.B.E. in the recent Queen’s Birthday Honours list. Professor Dawson’s services to legal education have been varied and many, but here it is worth recording her work as a legal historian.

Professor Dawson is also a distinguished property lawyer with a strong specialism in trade marks. This has also been reflected in her work as a legal historian, with interesting work on trade marks in the eighteenth century, as well as on matters such as treasure trove. As well as her own research, she is a past president of the Irish Legal History Society and been a major force in that Society’s programme and publications. She has facilitated and guided the work of others, as well as carrying out her own research.

Here in Scotland she is remembered for her Address to the AGM of the Stair Society on 17 November, 2012. Her topic was entitled “Letters from Inveraray – the Eighth Duke of Argyll’s correspondence with the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava, with particular reference to Gladstone’s Land Acts”. It was a tour de force. It can now be read in the Stair Society’s seventh volume of miscellany.

If your blogger may be permitted a personal note, he started his career as a lecturer at the Queen’s University. Professor Dawson, then herself a young lecturer, was notably welcoming and helpful, and always willing to guide and advise. It is important to note that Professor Dawson, as well as brilliant as a scholar is also wise, an attribute, which, alas, not all scholars possess. It is this wisdom and experience which no doubt explains the calls on her service in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Advisory Council of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, and as an Honorary bencher of the Inn of Court of Northern Ireland.

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